

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Executive Registry

80-2588

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR

26 November 1980

NOTE FOR: The Honorable William Middendorf  
Lt. Gen. Edward L. Rowny

THROUGH :

FROM :

At the meeting last week with the DCI, Secretary Middendorf, and Gen. Rowny, the DCI raised the issue of stronger Presidential stand with the White House staff on leaks. After discussion, he said he would provide an issue paper with DCI recommendations on that subject. It is attached.

Attachment:  
As stated

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place  
in our  
Transition  
Records  
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DCI PROPOSAL FOR PRESIDENTIAL-LEVEL ACTION ON  
UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES AND SECURITY ISSUES ("LEAKS")

**PROBLEM:** In the last several years, leaks of classified information at the highest levels of the U.S. Government have reached a level that is now seriously affecting U.S. credibility in intelligence activities with our allies. In addition, our clandestine officers are reporting that not only is the leak problem hindering liaison with intelligence organizations overseas but is also hindering the clandestine recruitment of agents. People who will be literally risking their lives by providing the U.S. crucial and sensitive intelligence are more and more reluctant to do so. The U.S. is rapidly becoming known world-wide as the country that cannot keep a secret.

**BACKGROUND:** Separate issue papers are being prepared and will be made available to the transition team that will discuss major aspects of this problem, including recommendations on the Freedom of Information Act, on the new APEX system, on actions that the Department of Justice can take, and on security procedures for new appointees. This issue paper will focus on actions that the President-Elect might take.

**PROPOSAL:**

- ° The President, in the first days of his new Administration, could announce to his Cabinet and to his White House staff:
  - ° that unauthorized disclosure of classified information, particularly to the media, will not be tolerated;
  - ° that authorized disclosure of classified information will be made only by designated senior executive officials;
  - ° that the number of these designated officials will be reduced to an absolute minimum and they will be required to record each disclosure by subject and audience;
  - ° that all other officials disclosing classified information will automatically be guilty of a disciplinary breach;
  - ° that, depending on the seriousness of the disclosure, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, including firing;
  - ° and that random polygraph tests will be instituted throughout the President's Cabinet and immediate White House staff. These random polygraph tests will be quick and simple and consist of only two questions:

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1. have you disclosed classified information to an unauthorized source, and
2. have you disclosed classified information to a member of the media.

◦ Finally, a firing of a high level official early in the Administration for such a breach would add the utmost credibility to the new policy.

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